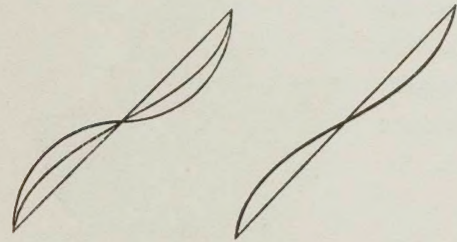


In the early works of the Gothic period, the tracery would appear to have been much less the offspring of compass-work than in the later period, which has most appropriately been termed the *Geometrical*, from the immoderate use of compass-work.



Here is a curve (A) common to Greek Art, to the Gothic period, and so much delighted in by the Mohammadan races. This becomes graceful the more it departs from the curve which the union of two parts of circles would give.

9. A still further charm is found in the works of the Arabs and Moors from their conventional treatment of ornament, which, forbidden as they were by their creed to represent living forms, they carried to the highest perfection. They ever worked as nature worked, but always avoided a direct transcript; they took her principles, but did not, as we do, attempt to copy her works. In this, again, they do not stand alone; in every period of faith in art, all ornamentation was ennobled by the ideal; never was the sense of propriety violated by a too faithful representation of nature.

Thus, in Egypt, a lotus carved in stone was never such an one as you might have plucked, but a conventional representation perfectly in keeping with the architectural members of which it formed a part; it was a symbol of the power of the king over countries where the lotus grew, and added poetry to what would otherwise have been a rude support.

The colossal statues of the Egyptians were not little men carved on a large scale, but architectural representations of Majesty, in which were symbolised the power of the monarch, and his abiding love of his people.

In Greek art, the ornaments, no longer symbols, as in Egypt, were still further conventionalised; and in their sculpture applied to architecture, they adopted a conventional treatment both of *pose* and relief very different to that of their isolated works.

In the best periods of Gothic art the floral ornaments are treated conventionally, and a direct imitation of nature is never attempted; but as art declined, they became less idealised, and more direct in imitation.

The same decline may be traced in stained glass, where both figures and ornaments were treated at first conventionally; but as the art declined, figures and draperies, through which light was to be transmitted, had their own shades and shadows.

In the early illuminated MSS. the ornaments were conventional, and the illuminations were in flat tints, with little shade and no shadow; whilst in those of a later period highly-finished representations of natural flowers were used as ornament, casting their shadows on the page.

ON THE COLOURING OF MORESQUE ORNAMENT.

When we examine the system of colouring adopted by the Moors, we shall find, that as with form, so with colour, they followed certain fixed principles, founded on observations of nature's laws, and which they held in common with all those nations who have practised the arts with success. In all archaic styles of art, practised during periods of faith, the same true principles prevail; and although we find in all somewhat of a local or temporary character, we yet discern in all much that is eternal and immutable; the same grand ideas embodied in different forms, and expressed, so to speak, in a different language.

10. The ancients always used colour to assist in the development of form, always employed it as a further means of bringing out the constructive features of a building.

Thus, in the Egyptian column, the base of which represented the root—the shaft, the stalk—the capital, the buds and flowers of the lotus or papyrus, the several colours were so applied that the appearance of strength in the column was increased, and the contours of the various lines more fully developed.

In Gothic architecture, also, colour was always employed to assist in developing the forms of the panel-work and tracery; and this it effected to an extent of which it is difficult to form an idea, in the present colourless condition of the buildings. In the slender shafts of their lofty edifices, the idea of elevation was still further increased by upward-running spiral lines of colour, which, while adding to the apparent height of the column, also helped to define its form.

In Oriental art, again, we always find the constructive lines of the building well defined by colour; an apparent additional height, length, breadth, or bulk always results from its judicious application; and with the ornaments in relief it develops constantly new forms which would have been altogether lost without it.

The artists have in this but followed the guiding inspiration of Nature, in whose works every transition of form is accompanied by a modification of colour, so disposed as to assist in producing distinctness of expression. For example, flowers are separated by colour from their leaves and stalks, and these again from the earth in which they grow. So also in the human figure every change of form is marked by a change of colour; thus the colour of the hair, the eyes, the eyelids, and lashes, the sanguine complexion of the lips, the rosy bloom of the cheek, all assist in producing distinctness, and in more visibly bringing out the form. We all know how much the absence or impairment of these colours, as in sickness, contributes to deprive the features of their proper meaning and expression.

Had nature applied but one colour to all objects, they would have been indistinct in form as well as monotonous in aspect. It is the boundless variety of her tints that perfects the modelling and defines the outline of each; detaching equally the modest lily from the grass from which it springs, and the glorious sun, parent of all colour, from the firmament in which it shines.

11. The colours employed by the Moors on their stucco-work were, in all cases, the *primaries*, blue, red, and yellow (gold). The *secondary colours*, purple, green, and orange, occur only in the *Mosaic dados*, which, being near the eye, formed a point of repose from the more brilliant colouring above. It is true that, at the present day, the grounds of many of the ornaments are found to be green; it will always be found, however, on a minute examination, that the colour originally employed was blue, which, being a metallic pigment, has become green from the effects of time. This is proved by the presence of the particles of blue colour, which occur everywhere in the crevices: in the restorations, also, which were made by the Catholic kings, the grounds of the ornaments were repainted both green and purple. It may be remarked that, among the Egyptians and the Greeks, the Arabs and the Moors, the primary colours were almost entirely, if not exclusively, employed, during the early periods of art; whilst, during the decadence, the secondary colours became of more importance. Thus, in Egypt, in Pharaonic temples, we find the primary colours predominating; in the Ptolemaic temples, the secondary; so also on the early Greek temples are found the primary colours, whilst at Pompeii every variety of shade and tone was employed.

In modern Cairo, and in the East generally, we have green constantly appearing side by side with red, where blue would have been used in earlier times.

This is equally true of the works of the Middle Ages. In the early manuscripts and in stained glass, though other colours were not excluded, the primaries were chiefly used; whilst in later times we have every variety of shade and tint, but rarely used with equal success.

12. With the Moors, as a general rule, the primary colours were used on the upper portions